



Sincerely yours,
Ted Kaczynski

THE UNABOMBER LETTERS

A YAHOO NEWS SPECIAL REPORT

Ted's guide to living in the wild

Following his arrest, Kaczynski received numerous letters asking for advice on gardening, nature and how to live off the grid.

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YAHOO!

NEWS

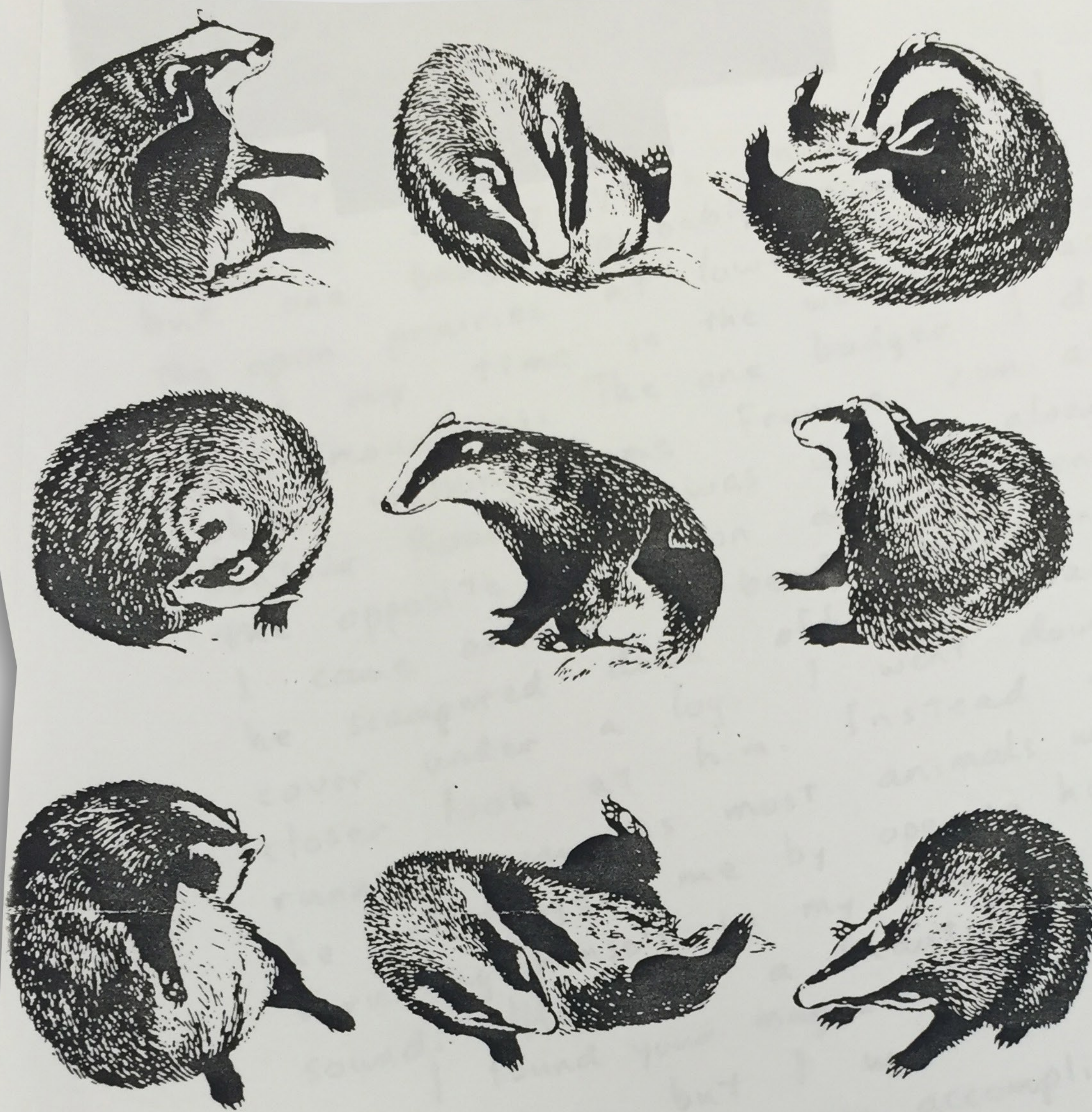


Fig. 9.9 Grooming attitudes. (Drawn from life.)

Grooming

It is a familiar sight to see badgers scratching themselves after emergence. This they do with great thoroughness, contorting themselves in various ways to get at every part of their anatomy. Typical positions are shown in Fig. 9.9.

One of the more amusing postures often shown by an adult boar is when he sits fairly upright on his haunches, possibly leaning slightly backwards and scratches his belly with slow deliberate actions of both front paws. A boar will sometimes do this while sitting in the shallow bowl-like depression often found near a sett entrance.

[Copy]

September 14, 1998

CLASS I

Dear Mr. [REDACTED]:

In all my years in Montana I never saw but one badger, probably because they frequent the open prairies at lower elevations, whereas I spent my time in the wooded areas and the high mountains. The one badger I did see I met while walking home from a run along Humbug Contour Road. He was walking along the road in the opposite direction and I encountered him as I came around a bend. As soon as he saw me he scampered down off the road and took cover under a log. I went down to get a closer look at him. Instead of cowering or running away as most animals would have done, he challenged me by opening his jaws and thrusting himself in my direction with a hissing sound. He was a beautiful animal!

I found your magazine mildly ~~entertaining~~ entertaining, but I will tell you frankly that I think you would have accomplished more if you had devoted the whole thing to badger lore. It ..

ITED KACZYNSKI

November 14, 1998

4.

Best regards,

Ted

P.S. Yes, I wish I could share some of your beets. I used to grow keets myself in Montana. I grew them in my upper garden patch, where I couldn't run water directly to them, and all through June and July I would toil at carrying buckets of water to them. But then when they were ready to eat in August they were always a treat. There is no comparison between store-bought beets and those that are cooked immediately after being picked from the garden.

But what is your special ~~method~~ method of fertilizing beets? I used to fertilize mine with shit — my own shit. I don't know whether it improved the flavor, but anyway it worked.

— TK

NSKI I

September 3, 1999

CLASS I

Dear

Thanks for your card, which I enjoyed. Yes, you're right, I do believe that cities and towns are horrible and should be done away with, and, yes, I do agree that the human race should collapse so that the rest of the world can flourish.

Good luck, and keep climbing trees.
(I used to like to do that too.)

Best regards,

Ted Kaczynski

October 27, 1999

11/13
3 New Names
16/12/99 - 10/1/00
for New Names!
I still can't read
the letters - just a copy
of the letters - 10/1/00
11/13

Your letter moved me very strongly. In fact, to tell you the truth, it made me cry. I would appreciate it if you would write to me again and tell me more about Grandfather Rabbit, Waboose. In fact, please tell me everything that you know about him.

Thanks,

Ted Kaczynski

Theodore John Kaczynski

04475-046

U.S. Penitentiary Max

P.O. Box 8500

Florence CO 81226-8500

Ted KACZYNSKI, [REDACTED]

9.25.00

MY NAME IS [REDACTED] I AM 54 YRS. OLD AND I HAVE WORKED FOR THE PAST 30 YRS. AS A DENTAL TECHNICIAN. I HAVE EXPERIENCED AVERAGE SUCCESS IN MY WORK AND WOULD DESCRIBE MYSELF AS A LONER. MY DESIRE IN LIFE IS TO LIVE AS YOU DID IN THE WILDS OF MONTANA, THOUGH I PREFER IDAHO. THE PEACE AND BEING LEFT ALONE ARE WHAT APPEAL TO ME. I HAVE SAVED A LITTLE MONEY AND WOULD LIKE TO PURCHASE SOME WILDERNESS LAND AND BUILD A CABIN ON IT.

AS YOU MAY EXPECT I HAVE SEVERAL QUESTIONS CONCERNING THAT TYPE OF LIFE. I HOPE THAT YOU MIGHT BE WILLING TO WRITE TO ME AND GIVE ME YOUR ADVICE. I HAVE SPENT MOST OF MY FREE TIME READING AND LISTENING TO CLASSICAL MUSIC WHICH IS BASICALLY MY LIFE. A LIFE STYLE I PLAN TO CONTINUE WHEN I AM WHERE I WANT TO BE.

ONE OTHER THING I SHOULD MENTION IS I HAD TO HAVE AN AORTIC VALVE REPLACEMENT AND NOW HAVE A PACE MAKER. THIS WAS DONE IN 1995. I CAN STILL WORK HARD BUT HAVE TO HAVE THE PACEMAKER ADJUSTED EVERY 3 MONTHS.

I HOPE WE CAN CORRESPOND. SINCERELY, [REDACTED]

TED KACZYNSKI
to

519
March 19, 2001

Dear [redacted]

Alright, I'll reward your persistence with an answer. But this is the only time I will write to you. Reason: There are just too many people who want to correspond with me, so it isn't practical for me to answer more than a small minority of them.

In answer to your questions: I got my drinking & cooking water from a small stream that ran across my property or from a spring that ran into the stream. Yes, Giardia was a concern. Another possible concern was tapeworm eggs from coyote feces. I boiled all my drinking water.

Yes, I hand-sawed all my wood for cooking and heating.

I found it possible to supply practically all my fruit, vegetable, and meat needs by hunting, gathering wild plants, and gardening. I was heavily dependent on store-bought staples like rice, flour, etc. But these are cheap staples, far less expensive than meat & vegetables, so my food costs were only a fraction of what they would have been if I hadn't provided my own meat & vegetables. I probably could have provided all of my own starchy staples, in the form of potatoes & parsnips, if I'd been willing to cut down all the trees on my property and turn all of it into a garden. That is, into a potato & parsnip patch. But I didn't want to cut the trees and tear up the around.

There are many good books that will tell you which wild plants are good to eat. For example, Wild Edible Plants of the Western United States, by Donald Kirk.

I suggest you go to a public library and ask the librarians to help you find books on edible wild plants, organic gardening, and other topics relevant to your interests. The library probably won't have all the books you need, but the librarians can show you how to get books from other libraries through the Interlibrary Loan System.

You ask whether I was bothered by outsiders entering my area. The answer is yes! That would have been alright if they had been people like me who came quietly and on foot just to enjoy the woods. But most of them were crude joy-riders who came buzzing around on snowmobiles, helicopters, or motorcycles, tearing up the countryside.

You talk about finding a secluded place to build your cabin. I'm afraid I can't help you with that. It will be very difficult to find a truly secluded place where you can ~~by~~ buy a piece of land, and even if you find one, it's all too likely that within a few years civilization will begin closing in around you. There just isn't any place left in North

[Sanitized version of page 3 of letter
to Richard Evans, 3/19/01 *

3.

America — maybe no place left in the world —
where you can still be safe from industrial
civilization.

Good luck (you'll need it),

Ted Kaczynski

[* Censors would not let the original p. 3 of this
letter pass.]

July 2, 2001

Ted, It was good to hear from you. Your COUNCIL CONCERNING the AXE WAS good. When I WAS eight years old I SAW my Neighbor Professor (MICRO BIOLOGY)) burry AN AXE blade IN the SHIN of his leg. I CAN still hear him yell "Lordy free me". It WAS A mess but he refused ANY medical treatment relying ON his seventeen year old daughter to bandage him while he sat ON the back porch. It WAS A long recovery.

You were correct in your statement that it would be extremely difficult to locate some property suitable for a homestead. When I locate ground with water, soil for planting, remote enough NOT to be bothered by outsiders I AM so far away from town it will be A days walk to get to town for supplies. A bicycle may be the ANSWER, I AM also looking for AN AREA with wildlife I CAN harvest for protine.

Returning to the AXE. My Idea is to drop the trees with AN AXE, I have purchased AN Aporatus that will hook into A SNAG AND elevate it about 1' off the ground then I plan to HAND saw the logs

TED KACZYNSKI
to

519

June 18, 2001

Dear Mr. [REDACTED]

Another book that you might find useful:
Stalking the Wild Asparagus, by Euell Gibbons.

Also, since you'll probably be using an axe to cut firewood, a note of caution: A full-sized axe in the hands of a novice is a very dangerous tool. It has a marked tendency to glance off whatever you are chopping with it, and if your foot is in the way when it glances off, you may be crippled for life. So extreme caution is called for.

Good luck,

Ted Kaczynski

TED KACZYNSKI

February 19, 2004

0519.0

Dear Mr.

I'm sorry I've taken so long to answer your letter of October 8, 2003. I've just had too much to keep me busy.

I like your plans, especially the fact that you have chosen a gulch that is so infested with rattlesnakes that no one goes there.

As for size and design of cabin, you had best figure that out yourself, because you know your own needs, the terrain, and the local resources; I don't know any of that. But I'll offer the following comments, for whatever they may be worth. My cabin was 10 feet by 12 feet inside. That was big enough for the first few years, but as I accumulated junk over the years the cabin became rather cramped due to ^{lack of} storage space. You might consider building a cabin with two 10-by-12 rooms: One to live in and the other for storage. In the winter you will need to heat only the room you live in, which will require much less fuel than heating two rooms, or one larger room.

If you want to build a log cabin you may find it useful to consult The Book of Camping and Woodcraft by Horace Kephart. This book contains all sorts of useful information about wilderness living, including information on the construction of log cabins. Kephart knew what he was talking about: He lived for years in a cabin in the Great Smoky Mountains way back in the early 1900's.

One thing to remember about your stove is that you have to keep the stove and the stovepipe far enough away from the wooden parts of your cabin so that you don't set your home on fire. That stove and the stovepipe can get very hot.

You should also remember that the amount of water your springs produce is likely to vary with the season and also with the amount of rainfall in a given year. It's possible your springs might dry up in a dry year.

P.S. I know a couple of other people who are interested in living (2 in a cabin as you plan to do. I might be able to put you in touch with them so that you and they can exchange information and ideas. Would you like that? —TJK 0519.0

I know nothing about rattlesnakes from personal experience. There were no rattlesnakes in the part of Montana where I lived, because the climate was too cold for them. But for whatever they may be worth I'll offer the following ideas, based on things that I have read.

The mortality rate from rattlesnake bites is fairly low, but rattlesnake venom causes a great deal of local tissue damage, so that the bites often cause permanent disability. They can even necessitate the amputation of a limb. If you're going to be living among a lot of rattlesnakes, I have a feeling there is a considerable risk that sooner or later, during a careless moment, you will step on one. To avoid getting bitten in such a case, you can wear snake boots. These are boots that come up to your knees and are designed to be impenetrable to rattlesnake fangs. But snake boots are expensive, heavy, and probably not very comfortable to wear constantly. Another possibility might be to keep your feet and legs wrapped up to the knee in several layers of tough cloth ~~wrap~~ such as canvas. Horace Kephart recommends this, and I've read that some of the southwestern Indians wrapped their legs this way for protection against snakebite. Kephart also gives a lot of other information about rattlesnakes and their bites, but his advice is probably out of date from a medical point of view.

I know there are at least a couple of universities in your area. I suggest you go to their biology departments and ask whether they have a herpetologist on their staff. A herpetologist is a snake expert. Professors are often very generous in giving out information on their specialties — free of charge. A herpetologist might be able to give you a lot of information, advice, and ideas that would prove very useful in dealing with the snakes on your property.

Good luck and best wishes,
Ted Kaczmarek

TED KACZYNSKI
to
ROB (in UK)

APRIL 14, 2000

Dear Rob,

It's my understanding that you would like to serve as cameraman if and when Richard Hering comes to interview me. That's okay with me, but it's still uncertain whether the interview will ever happen. I've written to Richard about that, and I assume he will pass the information on to you.

I've received all three of your letters, but I don't answer more than a small fraction of the letters I receive. I just get too many of them.

In your third letter you mention that you're planting vegetable seeds. I envy you. I wish I could be out of doors working on a vegetable garden.

What do you do about the rats? Trap them? Sometimes packrats used to try to move in under my cabin. They aren't nearly as bad as domestic rats, and unlike them they aren't normally parasitic on humans, but they nevertheless can cause problems. I used to trap them. They are good eating. I've read that ordinary domestic rats are good eating too, but I've never had the opportunity to try them.

Best regards,

Ted Kaczynski

[See other side]

TED KACZYNSKI
to

September 12, 2003

0779

Dear

Thanks for your letter postmarked August 29 and for the ten dollars you enclosed. Both are very welcome.

As for my legal action to recover my property, I wish the media would shut up about it and about me. Until you've been involved in something like this and have had an opportunity to compare what the media say with what you know to be true, you have no idea how much of what the media print or broadcast is false. Luckily, a lawyer has now been appointed to represent me in the return-of-property action, and that makes things much easier for me.

You ask whether there is an explanation for the fact that some of my correspondence is lost. There's no certain explanation, but my guess is that most (not all) of the lost mail gets delivered to the wrong inmate through carelessness of prison staff. Of course if the inmate were honest he would return the misdelivered letter for delivery to the right inmate, but the majority of inmates here are not in prison as a punishment for excessive honesty. It happens occasionally that I receive mail that is addressed to another inmate, so it's safe to assume that some mail addressed to me is mistakenly delivered to other inmates.

This can't account for all of the missing mail, since a few of my outgoing letters have been lost, too. But the number of outgoing letters that have

[TJK to

2.

been lost is only a fraction of the number of incoming letters that have been lost.

You mention the weeds in your garden. I had weeds in my garden in Montana, too, and I ate most of them. They were an important part of the crop. Nearly all of the weeds were edible; the main ones were pennycress a.k.a. fanweed a.k.a. *Thlaspi arvense*, shepherd's purse a.k.a. *Capsella bursa-pastoris*, lamb's quarters a.k.a. goosefoot a.k.a. *Chenopodium* species, and poverty weed (I forget the scientific name). Each day I would weed my garden until I had enough greens to put in my stew for my evening meal. That way I kept my garden weeded and at the same time kept myself supplied with vegetables until the planted crops were ready to eat.

In your letter of June 30 you mentioned a fire in Keystone that was thought to be arson. How did that turn out? What happened to the three "suspects"?

Again, thanks for the ten bucks. I can certainly use the money. I hope all goes well with you.

P.S. If your local library has a copy of the 1989 edition of

Elizabeth Marshall Thomas, The ^{Ted} Harmless People, I could use a photocopy of her epilogue, "The Bushmen in 1989". - TJK

Best regards,

has no apparent practical relevance. I'll only point out that it's not so unusual for people to care about what happens after their death, even if they have no children. I cared and still care very much about what happens to my part of Montana after I'm gone. Unfortunately, my part of Montana can't be isolated from the rest of the world, so I have to care about what happens to the whole biosphere.

Paragraph 17 of your letter of 12/29/10. You wonder why greater numbers of people didn't find ISAIF "important and effective." To judge from the letters I've received since 1996, many people have been strongly interested by ISAIF, but their interest leads nowhere because they don't know what to do next. What is needed is an effective group, movement, or organization that they can join. See Technological Slavery, pages 227-28.

Your postscript. I never much liked the "Unabomber for President" campaign either, but Lydia nevertheless is a valuable person and a very good friend of mine.

I look forward to hearing from you further.

Best regards,
Ted

Enclosed: Letter from TJK to David Skrbina 2/2/11
(carbon copy)

to

August 3, 2007

Dear

[corrected first draft]

Thanks for your interesting letter of 7/21/09, about your camping trip. I hope you have received my letter of 7/23/09 by this time. As I mentioned in that letter, I did receive the copies of the Google article that you sent me.

You ask how I knew what was safe to eat in the mountains. Well, I just tried things out on my little brother, and if he didn't get sick... No, I'm joking. But it's too bad I didn't try things out on him -- the world would be a better place without that lying little wretch.

Speaking seriously now, there are books on edible wild plants that will tell you what is good to eat and what isn't. I can recommend Merritt Lyndon Fernald and Alfred Charles Kinsey, Edible Wild Plants of Eastern North America, Revised Edition, Dover, New York, 1996.

This is a more up-to-date version of an old classic that originally came out, I think, in the 1930s or 1940s. Another useful book is Euell Gibbons, Stalking the Wild Asparagus, various editions. Gibbons covers relatively few plants in comparison with Fernald and Kinsey, but he gives a lot more information about preparing the plants for eating than Fernald and Kinsey do.

Before you try eating any wild plants, you should make very sure that you have identified them correctly, because there are some deadly poisonous ones. For example, poison hemlock and hellebore might grow in Kentucky, and either of those could be fatal. I would also recommend that any plants growing in water or at the edge of water should be eaten only after they are well cooked, because otherwise you could get parasites (such as liver flukes) from them. Gibbons (at least in the first edition of his book) recommended eating watercress after it had been treated with a water-purifying chemical, but I think that is a bad idea. Parasites such as liver

JUN 10

8,31,09

(2)

flukes bore into the plant and encyst themselves there, and I doubt that the water-purifying chemicals would get at them.

For better information on identifying plants, you could consult the botanical manuals used by professional botanists, which you should be able to find in a library.

Another old classic is Horace Kephart, The Book of Camping and Woodcraft, but I don't know whether it is still available. It doesn't have a lot of information about edible plants, but it does have a lot of other information about woodland skills.

Did I ever get any animals? Sure. Montana is poorly provided with edible wild plants in comparison to Kentucky, but there were a lot of things there that you could legally hunt at any time of year and without a license -- such as snowshoe hares, red squirrels, rock chucks (similar to woodchucks or groundhogs), and porcupines. I ate a lot of those. In Kentucky you would probably need a hunting license for that type of small game.

Enough for now.

Best regards,

Ted